

REMARKS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-9 remain in the application. Claims 10-12 have been cancelled.

Claims 1, 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by, or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over U.S. 4,863,756 to Hartig et al. (hereinafter Hartig). For the following reasons, the Examiner's rejection is traversed.

Hartig is directed to a method for coating continuously moving substrates by the deposition of compounds from the gas phase by means of plasma discharge, produced by an electrode, with a chemical reaction, a system of magnets for the generation of a magnetic trap to constrict the plasma being disposed on one side of the substrate. Figs. 1 and 2 of Hartig are reproduced below. The substrate 15 moves across the surface of the electrode 10. A gas feeding device 18 is located above the substrate 15 and the electrode 10. The substrate 15 passes through two plasma 22 tunnels in a magnetic trap as it is coated.

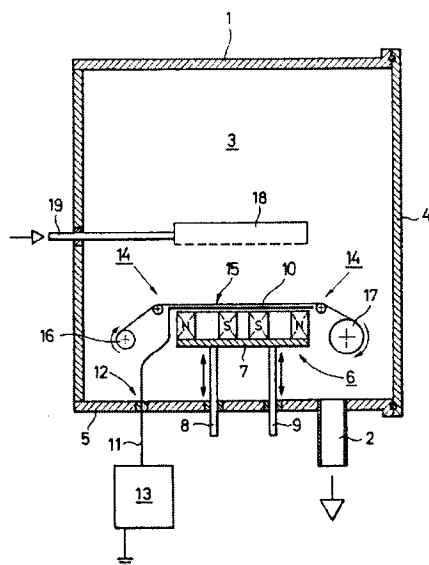


FIG. 1

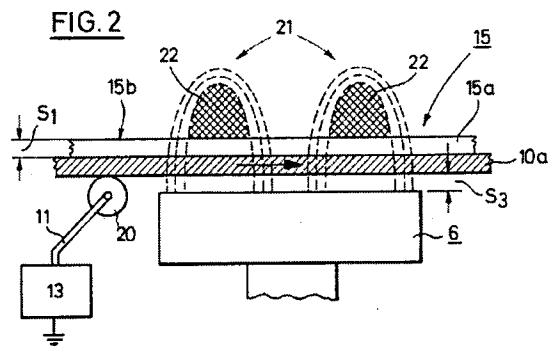


FIG. 2

Regarding claim 1, features of the claimed invention are not taught or suggested by the cited reference. Hartig does not teach or suggest a substrate support that is "equipped for positioning the substrate with a surface to be treated facing the magnetron face", as required. Rather, referring to Fig. 2 of Hartig, above, the substrate 15 includes a surface 15b that is to be treated. This surface 15b is averted from the system of magnets 6 and the conductive part 10a of the electrode 10 (see Col. 5 Lines 59-61 of Hartig). Thus, in Hartig the surface 15b of the substrate 15 to be treated faces away from the face of the magnets 6, and this teaches directly away from the claimed invention where a surface to be treated faces the magnetron face.

Applicant acknowledges, as stated by the Examiner, that Hartig also teaches a surface 15c of the substrate 15 which is opposite surface 15b. However, Applicant does not agree that surface 15c is a surface that is to be treated. Rather, Hartig states that such a surface is not treated. Specifically, Hartig states that the plasma

burns exclusively on the side of the substrate that lies opposite to the system of magnets. The distance between the substrate and the system of magnets or the electrodes is so small that a chemical reaction or a corona discharge cannot develop therebetween. (see Column 2, Lines 52-64) Hartig further states that the distance S2 from the electrode to the substrate is less than the dark space distance under specified process conditions and the magnetic trap is closed over the second surface of the substrate 15b which is averted from the electrode such that the constricted plasma and the chemical reaction zone are on the side 15b of the substrate averted from the electrode (Col. 4, Lines 6-18).

In Hartig, the surface 15b that is treated faces the gas feeding device, but does not face a magnetron face, as required by claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and claims 5 and 6 that depend therefrom is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4 and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartig. Claims 2-4 and 7-9 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 which is believed to be patentable over Hartig for at least the reasons stated above. The Examiner states that there is motivation to optimize the position of Hartig's magnetron electrode to avoid flaking and peeling of coated articles. But, as previously stated with regard to the claimed features described above, and not taught by Hartig, Hartig teaches directly away from the claimed features. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-4 and 7-9 is respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is

determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 18-0160, our Order No. FRR-16007.

Respectfully submitted,

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